

Final Visual Presentation
for the degree of
Master of Visual Arts

*Visual
Communication Design*

Hilary Fedoruk

1974



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FRAME - UP

by

HILARY FEDORUK

A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE

OF MASTER OF VISUAL ARTS


IN

VISUAL COMMUNICATION DESIGN

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DEPARTMENT

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and
recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research,
for acceptance, a thesis entitled:

Final Visual Presentation

submitted by HILARY FEDORUK

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Visual Arts in Visual Communication Design.

Date: August 30, 1974



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Master of Visual Arts in Visual Communication Design.

Date: August 10, 1974

TEXT OF BOOK ACCOMPANYING THESIS EXHIBITION

Title: "You are not being framed, but this is a 'Frame-Up'
(a surreptitious, underhand arrangement
or scheme made beforehand)

"A camera makes us aware of our differences. And our likes. This is what is meant by communication. A camera is a means of communication as strong as words. Stronger, for the language is universal and nothing is lost in translation."

"By definition photography is painting with light. It is the light working through us that is the photograph. And what is photographed. And who photographs." But the camera "is only an eye. It doesn't have a heart."

-Robert Leverant, Zen in the Art of Photography
(Images Press; San Fransisco; 1972)

The camera eye is the viewfinder. Seeing through the 'frame' of the viewfinder puts us in a 'frame of mind' willing to search for and accept ideas which provide the 'framework' of alien cultures, philosophies or aspects of our own society. Thus, we can 'frame' our own beliefs and biases within a broader 'frame of reference'.

'Frame' and 'space' are two words intimately connected with photography and with each other. In photography the picture is constantly being framed and space-frame relationships being sought.

The framing process follows through all stages of photography starting when a view is framed automatically by the eye. The eye isolates the focal area from the peripheral area of our vision through difference in focus. In the 'mind's eye' then the focal area is imagined isolated from even its peripheral surroundings. In the camera viewfinder, with the line frame superimposed on the scene a true isolation of the scene can be viewed. This selected area is then recorded on a frame of film. Later this can be seen as a positive on a contact sheet or as a small print. With the help of two L-shaped cards further framing can be tried to refine what has already been framed.

Since I am dealing with frames and therefore with space, and since both of these words conjure up various meanings, I have used Webster's New World Dictionary to provide some relevant definitions.

'Frame' can be used in many ways: nature, setting, border, structure, framework, skeleton, form, human form, body, mood, film, false charge, to make, to invent, to border, to form, to prearrange, to plan, to accuse falsely. Connected with 'frame' then are frame of mind, frame of reference, frame-up, framework.

The definitions which seem most useful and in context here are:

frame--to enclose in a border, provide a border for;
anything made of parts fitted together according to a design;
the case or border into which a window or door is set and which serves as a structural support;
an ornamental border surrounding and supporting a picture.

space--distance extending without limit in all directions;
that which is thought of as boundless, continuous expanse extending in all directions or in three directions within which all material things are contained.

The combination of these two words 'space-frame' can be thought of as the definition of space apart from reality's infinite space. Setting things into space-frames gives a frame of reference which makes them more understandable as they can be more easily related to our known experience.

INTRODUCTION

My photographs concern frames.

The photographing of frames and organizing of the ensuing exhibition, and this book, has given me an increased awareness and understanding of our perception of contained space, open space, the interaction between frame and contained space, and the interaction between frame, contained space, and surrounding space. This is what I hope to communicate.

I first became interested in the 'framed space' theme about two years ago. A project was assigned on the theme 'internal--external'. For this project, I did a photographic series looking into and out of a car. The inclusion of frames in some of the photographs juxtaposed internal with external and created some interesting conflicts.

I returned to the 'framed space' theme last summer. I was photographing an old house and was especially interested in the differences in scale and depth which could be seen in the window and door frames, and in the frames of objects.

The frame can affect our view of space in different ways. In the following quote, James Johnson Sweeney is talking specifically about picture frames, but his comments can be applied much more broadly. The quote is from the introduction to The Art and History of Frames by Henry Heydenryk. (James H. Heineman, Inc.; New York; 1963)

"No matter how large, nor how small a picture is, the surface always has its limits...In the Occident a frame has always been employed either to emphasize these frontiers with the pose of isolating or protecting the picture, or to soften the lines of demarcation between the picture and its architectural...surroundings and effect a graceful transition between the two." A frame serves "either as a fence against the encroachment of its environment, or as a link to its background and surroundings. The most important thing a frame does is to limit precisely the extent of surface that the beholder is to consider. The relation between the painted area and its surroundings must be defined clearly, and it is the frame that supplies this definition providing a graceful transition from one surface to another. In another, deeper sense, a transition must be made from the imaginary world of the image to the real world of the wall."

Sweeney has mentioned three functions of the frame which seem suitable divisions for grouping my photographs.

The three functions which I have extracted are:

1. to limit the space to be considered thereby dividing and isolating it from its environment
2. to provide definition of character and form
3. to provide a transition from one surface, spatial plane or one reality to another.

A FRAME LIMITS THE SPACE TO BE CONSIDERED THEREBY DIVIDING AND ISOLATING IT FROM ITS ENVIRONMENT

Frames enclose varying depths of space sometimes very shallow, sometimes infinitely deep. Sometimes a frame within a frame occurs taking in various clearly separate planes of space within one unifying frame.

By isolating an area from its environment, however, necessary clues to depth and scale may be cut off. When this happens it creates visual confusion. Without depth indicators the enclosed space may appear directly behind the frame, where it is actually far back. In other cases, a familiar object becomes something irrational because it has been unfamiliarly cropped.

A FRAME PROVIDES DEFINITION OF CHARACTER AND FORM.

The basic form of an object limits it physically and visually and can be thought of as its frame. If seen in silhouette, the object frame usually provides enough definition to identify the object.

The frame itself can give definition to the space which it encloses. Without the frame to define the space the scale and distance may not be evident or even the character of the enclosed space may not be evident.

Modern sculptor Giacometti, has used fine frames in his sculptures to define the space to be considered and to give the enclosed sculptural form more definition by providing it with a 'frame of reference' to which it could relate in scale.

Francis Bacon has made use of frames in his paintings also. He used them to define the space in which his figures are placed as being a room. Placing the figures in a room gives more definition to the figures since it affects the interpretation of their character and situation.

A FRAME PROVIDES A TRANSITION FROM ONE SURFACE, ONE SPATIAL PLANE OR ONE REALITY TO ANOTHER.

The physical character of the frame transfers its character to the enclosed space. This character interacts also with the surrounding space. If the character of the enclosed space is influenced in such a way that it becomes more like the character of the surrounding space then the transition from one to the other through the frame becomes smoother.

The character of the frame can also allow space to seem to flow in and out of the enclosed space if the transition is smooth enough. Creating frames which provide a smooth transition from enclosed to surrounding space in order that the space would seem to flow from one to the other has been the concern of several modern painters who did not want the physical boundaries to maintain the traditional spatial bounds.

In another sense, the frame can be considered a gateway to lead the eye into another plane while still being aware of the gateway which provides the lead in.

Giacometti has also used frames in his painting and drawing. These frames define the enclosed space in a different way from that used in his sculpture. In his paintings and drawings the frame defines not the existing space but a new imaginary space. A transition in space is created within the image. The following quote is from Alberto Giacometti, by Reinhold Hohl (Thames and Hudson; London; 1972; p. 170)

"The limitation of the imaginary space by visible boundaries, namely by frames within the frame... particularly between 1951 and 1954, he used it with the intention of transforming the innermost picture plane into a mirror space. We use this term because the border that separates the real frame from the drawn-in, inner frame functions like the frame of a mirror, separating the reflected image from the wall on which the mirror is hanging; but the mirror itself is like an opening in the wall the entrance to an imaginary space behind the wall.

The figures within the inner frame had the effect of mirror images, virtual realities in an imaginary space reserved for them... In addition, the inner frame opened up... a distinctly appreciable, doubly-deep space... This space 'behind the canvas' was exclusively reserved for the imaginary reality of the painted figure."

CONCLUSION

The frame has always recieved considerable attention. The character of picture frames, for instance, has always been closely connected with life styles and attitudes. The fact that frames cause a very personal or individual reaction to the contained space makes them a topic for continuing study.

Ideas and suggestions for further study of framed space seem quite prevalent suggesting that I have just touched the surface of this topic so far.

One suggestion has been to further explore the effects of the television frame. Much of our experience comes to us second hand through this frame. Therefore, to see frames and framed space through this medium offers many possibilities for study. Using the television frame itself, or an image of the television frame in conjunction with other still images is another possibility.

Delving more into the frame of reference aspect is another direction for study. One could create an environment which would provide a controlled, different frame of reference and which would affect the interpretation of familiar space outside this frame of reference. Showing sequential steps from a broad frame of reference, down to a very small contained space could be another series. The many framed space situations which could be found and examined, of course, are endless. Framed 'mirror space' and its concepts is also a possibility for study.

LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHIC PLATES AND SLIDES

Plate	Description
1	Old frame bedstead. Original 13" x 10" (see slide #38)
2	Nude in window. Original 28" x 15" (see slide #29)
3	Looking out of a greenhouse window. Original 32" x 22" (see slide #23)
4	Signage on brick wall. Original sepia toned 13" x 20" (see slide #33)
5	Broken window of old car. Original 10" x 13"
6	Looking out of greenhouse window. Original 32" x 22"
7	Skywalk in winter. Original 26" x 20"
8	Grain elevator wall. Original 13" x 20" mounted on 16" x 24" card
9	Warehouse door. Original 13" x 11"

Slide	Description
	General installation shots of exhibition
1	View looking south
2	Looking east through entrance door
3	View of south end
4	View of north west wall
5	View of south west wall
6	View of south east corner
7	Closer view of south east corner

Modules

- 8 module #1 (24" x 24" x 16")
back inside panel
- 9 module #1
right side of back inside
- 10 module #2 (32" x 24" x 12")
- 11 module #3 (32" x 12" x 12")
- 12 module #3
- 13 module #3
- 14 module #3
- 15 module #4 (32" x 12" x 12")
- 16 module #4
- 17 module #4
- 18 module #5 (16" x 12" x 12")
viewed through frame of leaves--film on 32" x 24" sheet
of plexiglass
- 19 module #5
- 20 module #5
- 21 module #5
- 22 module #5

Individual pieces

- 23 Looking out of greenhouse window (32" x 22")
(see photographic plate #3)
- 24 Looking out of greenhouse window (32" x 22")
- 25 Broken windows--in wood frame with broken glass (28" x 22")
- 26 Side of barn--in aluminum frame (28" x 22")
- 27 Nude in barn window--in wood frame with broken glass
(28" x 22")

- 28 Nude in barn--framed in ornate picture frame (28" x 22")
- 29 Nude in window (28" x 15")
 (see photographic plate #2)
- 30 Looking into and out of garage door (16" x 10" each)
- 31 Looking into garage door (16" x 10")
- 32 Looking out of garage door (16" x 10")
- 33 Signage on brick wall (13" x 20" mounted on 16" x 20" card)
 (see photographic plate #4)
- 34 Malt bar in department store (13" x 20" mounted on
 16" x 20" card)
- 35 Bus windows (4 pieces 14" x 36" total)
- 36 Hub of wagon wheel with nude in centre (13" diameter)
 (sandwich of two negatives)
- 37 Nude framed by wood slats (13" x 13") (double exposure)
- 38 Old frame bedstead (13" x 10")
 (see photographic plate #1)
- 39 Old couch (10" x 20")
- 40 Battered parcel (10" x 14")

Book

- 41 Front cover (16" x 12")
- 42 Front cover showing film overlay
- 43 1st double page spread--preamble
- 44 2nd double page spread--introduction
- 45 3rd double page spread
- 46 4th double page spread
- 47 4th double page spread showing film overlay
- 48 5th double page spread
- 49 6th double page spread

50 7th double page spread showing cut out
51 8th double page spread
52 8th double page spread showing film overlay
53 9th double page spread
54 10th double page spread
55 11th double page spread showing cut out
56 12th double page spread
57 12th double page spread showing film overlay
58 13th double page spread
59 14th double page spread--conclusion
60 back cover (film overlay)

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